



Israel Trip Highlights + Havdalah Potluck

Saturday, November 12, 7 pm

Please join us for a lively discussion about the highlights of CSZ's August trip to Israel. We will end with a beautiful Havdalah service and veggie potluck. Come, talk, eat and, in community, mark the end of Shabbat. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share.

Thanksgiving Interfaith Service

Tuesday, November 22, 7 pm

Join with our neighborhood faith communities for a service of praise, prayer and song from our many faith traditions. We invite you to join us as we give thanks for the many gifts in our lives. Please note that we will be collecting donations for the San Francisco Food Bank at this service. Please bring non-perishable canned or packaged food with you.

World AIDS Day Commemoration

Thursday, December 1, 7 pm

Randy Weled will lead an evening of remembrance and healing as we join people worldwide in commemorating World AIDS day, the international day of action on HIV and AIDS.

Our Jewish Identity During the Christian Holidays

Thursday, December 22, 7 pm

Randy Weled will lead a lively discussion as we confront the challenges of being and becoming Jewish during this time of year.

The Jewish Meaning of Life

With Dr. Dvora Weisberg

Renowned Talmud Scholar and Faculty Member at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Presented by the Jeffrey B. Miller Scholar-in-Residence Program at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.

Friday, December 2

"The Good Life"

Dr. Weisberg's sermon at Shabbat evening services explores how our ancient tradition is a source of guidance for contemporary Jews seeking meaning.

Services at 8:15 pm. Festive Oneg Shabbat to follow. Everyone welcome.

Saturday, December 3

"Rabbinic Heroes and Social Justice"

An afternoon of interactive learning about controversies in Tikkun Olam, and the struggle of ancient and modern rabbis to integrate the religious and the ethical into a single system of social justice.

Light lunch at 12 noon, learning from 1-4 pm. Admission \$36; students and CSZ members \$18.

From Camels to Politics: Sha'ar Zahavnicks Discover Israel

By Don Fischer

We were standing for the first time above the rooftops of Jerusalem's Old City. Looking out over thousands of years of ancient history and contemporary conflicts, biblical and social miracles, blessings, tragedies and failures, I felt that we too -- our small band of Sha'ar Zahavnicks -- were now part of this living history that changes by the hour. We had come to Israel certainly, as ordinary tourists, many of us for the first time, others to re-experience the country through a fresh perspective. And, we had come as an LGBT-identified, Reform congregation, a dual identity that, we would learn, occupies the spotlight of social change in Israel.

Within two days of being in Israel, amidst the strategically uncertain and emotionally charged withdrawal from Gaza, we had met with Yael Dayan, one of the Israel's most progressive politicians, on the forefront of the country's civil rights movements including LGBT, women's and children's rights. We met with Rabbi Meyer Azari, of Congregation Beth Daniel in Tel Aviv, a leader in Israel's bur-

geoning Reform movement. Pinchas Itay shared with us his experience of being the only "out" member of Tel Aviv's city council.

Our first lesson: nothing is simple in Israel. To be a reform Jew in a country which has historically defined itself as orthodox vs. secular is to be a new kind of Jew. And to wear the rainbow flag is to be an even newer Jew. Our new Israeli friends greeted us with open hearts and minds, eager to talk about the face of progressive Judaism in Israel, the extraordinary alliance between the Reform movement and evolving LGBT rights, our own experience as an LGBT identified congregation, and how we, should we choose, could help carry the torch of progressive Judaism in Israel.

Well, quite a heady load, that was, for 16 jet-lagged sojourners, eager to soak up the Mediterranean sun, feast on the best falafel in the world (ok, strictly my opinion!), experience the ruins, ocean, desert, the music and song of so many cultures living in a place roughly the size of New

Why Wait for the World to Come?

The Benefits of Text Study

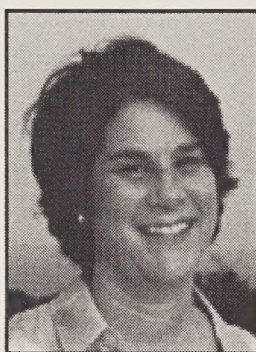
How may a culture's highest value be discerned? How can one determine a culture's concept of the ideal human activity? According to an anthropological theory, a key to ascertaining which activity a social, cultural, or religious group considers most worthwhile is to identify its vision of life after death. The activity aspired for in the afterlife is often the most highly valued pursuit during life. For example, Native Americans conceive of the afterlife as a "Happy Hunting Ground." Arabs tend to portray paradise as an oasis. Vikings aspired for Valhalla, the hall of Odin, a place reserved for heroes slain in battle.

In Jewish religious literature, the afterlife is often portrayed as a *yeshivah shel ma'alah*, an Academy on High. Life in the World to Come is described as an eternal preoccupation with the study of sacred texts, with God—the author of the Torah, as teacher, and with those who merit eternal life as God's students. It is not surprising therefore, to find the talmudic view that the first question one will be asked by the heavenly tribunal in the afterlife will be, "Did you set aside time for study of the Torah?"

For Judaism, study of our sacred texts is the most highly valued activity. According to the Talmud, study is the supreme *mitzvah*; the study of Torah is equivalent to all the other commandments. Study is the means by which Jewish ethical and religious teachings are preserved and transmitted. But, while study of the Torah serves to perpetuate Judaism, it satisfies an even higher mission.

The goal of study is to bring about the spiritual transformation of the individual. According to Rabbi Byron Sherwin, "Learning serves as a critical component in the creation of an artful life. Learning can be life's greatest adventure." The Hasidic master Mendel of Kotzk, is reputed to have said the following to a scholar who was erudite but nothing more: "What good is understanding a text, if one does not thereby attain a better understanding of oneself?"

I love studying Jewish texts and I am exhilarated when I have the opportunity to study



information; they become touchstones, helping us to define who we are, as Jews and as human beings.

To engage in the study of the text means becoming involved in it, not only intellectually, but also emotionally. Texts stimulate us to examine our lives in light of the stories they tell and the legal and philosophical principles they embody. When a group of people sit together and explore the world of feelings the text stirs up, new bonds of understanding begin to emerge and one can feel a closeness to the Source and Giver of Torah.

Talmud scholar Dvora Weisberg offers a talmudic parable to illustrate the way in which study brings her closer to God:

Rabbah bar Nahmani was studying Torah and became aware that a dispute was taking place in the heavenly academy. God was arguing one side and all the other participants were arguing the other. It was agreed that Rabbah bar Nahmani should decide, since his expertise in the matter exceeded that of the disputants. Rabbah bar Nahmani ruled in favor of the position espoused by God. Only then was the opinion of the creator accepted; God could not prevail over the heavenly tribunal without human assistance!

For me, this story transmits several messages. Torah is not studied for purely practical reasons; God and the heavenly hosts surely have no fear of the type of ritual impurity with which the dispute dealt. Rather,... the study of Torah... is so valuable that it is an appropriate occupation even for God. Furthermore, humans play the central role in the study and interpretation of Torah; even God, who is the source and giver of Torah, requires human aid to understand the text... When I study, I feel that I am an active participant in ...an ongoing search for God's will and our place in the universe (from "The Study of Torah as a Religious

with you. Something unexpected happens as we connect to our primary sources. When we engage in words of torah, we do more than study. The words of the text become more than interesting pieces of

Act," in *Four Centuries of Jewish Women*, ed. Ellen Umansky).

I hope you will join us for our first Annual Jeffrey Miller Memorial Scholar-in-Residence with Professor Dvora Weisberg Dec. 2-3. Dr. Weisberg is Associate Professor of Rabbinics and Director of the Beit Midrash at Hebrew Union College's Los Angeles campus. As a professor of Talmud, she has earned a phenomenal reputation as a dynamic, compelling teacher. I had the pleasure of studying with her at a recent Women's Rabbinic Conference and knew I wanted to bring her to Sha'ar Zahav. Don't wait for the *yeshiva shel ma'alah* to engage with the text, the teacher, and our amazing and insightful community.

L'Shanah Tova,

Camille Shira

The Jewish Gaily Forward

November/December 2005

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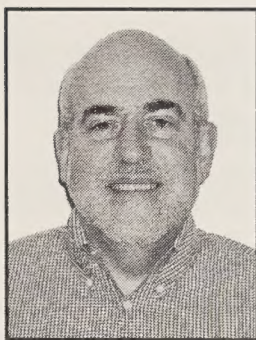
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Some Reflections on Israel

By Arthur Slepian



In August, my partner Gerry and I had the good fortune to be among the sixteen members of our congregational trip to Israel, led by Rabbi Angel. (A wonderful article about the trip by our member Don Fischer is part of this issue. I encourage you to read it.) All of us who traveled to Israel are eager to share our experiences there with the congregation, and we will do so in a variety of ways in the coming months. **The most immediate opportunity will be a Havdalah get-together on Saturday, Nov 12, 7 pm at CSZ. We invite you to come and hear about our trip, see our photos, and join us in conversation.**

On Erev Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Angel spoke movingly about our trip, some of the challenges of the current situation in Israel, and some of the ways in which our congregation can get engaged in support of progressive Judaism in Israel. You will also be hearing much more about these opportunities in the coming months as well. I want to acknowledge the leadership that Rabbi Angel has shown in making discussion of and involvement with Israel a more central aspect of our congregational life. And I'd like to share a few of my own reflections of our recent trip, which was my first visit ever to Israel.

"Welcome to your country." That is how we were greeted by several of the people we met. Not "your country if you choose to move here" or "your country if you pay taxes here." Simply "your country." I felt an immediate connection with this land that I had only read about for the first 50 years of my life. Israel is such a complex place, simultaneously modern and traditional, new skyscrapers and carefully preserved ruins, the Orthodox and the secular, fertile farmland and arid desert. It is hard to describe, but it is not hard to fall in love, to feel immense pride in what our people have built and created there, and to conclude that the future of this country and of the Jewish people are ineluctably bound together.

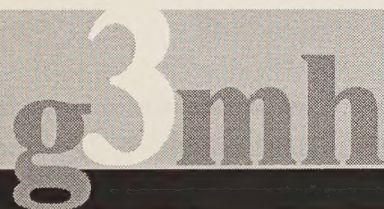
We were there at an historic moment, with our trip coinciding with the long-awaited and much debated disengagement from Gaza. I

felt proud of the democracy and passion for political discourse that was evident all around us. Gerry and I arrived in Israel three days before the start of the disengagement. Orange (anti-disengagement) and blue (pro) ribbons were evident everywhere. On our first drive from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, we crawled along on the highway as thousands of cars with orange ribbons headed to Jerusalem for a protest rally. Two days later our group visited the large open plaza outside of Tel Aviv's City Hall, and saw one end covered with an enormous blue banner in preparation for a rally in support of the withdrawal from Gaza. And everyone we met had an opinion. In Israel, we were told, every taxi driver imagines him or herself as a prime minister-in-waiting. And the most moving posters were those of the blue and orange ribbons intertwined together, reminding everyone that political disagreement must not be allowed to tear the fabric that holds the people of Israel together as a nation. And as the withdrawal concluded, I felt proud that the country could complete this difficult and at times heart-wrenching project without the Army firing a shot.

Standing on the Mount of Olives, over looking the Old City of Jerusalem, we could see "Sha'ar Zahav", the Golden Gate, one of the eleven gates leading into the Old City. But only seven of the gates are currently open and Sha'ar Zahav is one of the closed ones. Why? One tradition tells us that The Golden Gate is the gate through which the Messiah will enter Jerusalem, bringing the Jewish people to redemption. And that the emperor Suleiman, who heard of this tradition, decided to obstruct this arrival by sealing the gate in the 16th century.

I saw Sha'ar Zahav, this closed Golden Gate, as a metaphor for a larger reality. Israel, with all of its beauty, strength, and complexity, is also a country in which not all of the gates are open. As here in the U.S., indeed like just about everywhere, one does not have to stray too far beyond the typical tourist routes to see that the messiah has not yet arrived.

Yet I am hopeful that our Congregation Sha'ar Zahav can make a difference. As we find ways to aid those who are working so courageously to further progressive Jewish values in Israel, perhaps we can envision a time when the Sha'ar Zahav gate will be open, and people of all religions, genders and sexualities will walk through it in peace and freedom. I look forward to our ongoing congregational dialogue and action.



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Pinat Yeladim Umishpachah

Children and Family Corner



Baby Chavurah

Sunday, November 13, 10 - noon

Sunday, December 11, 10 - noon

Baby Havurah provides a monthly opportunity for the under 2 set to get together and bond with their future bnei mitzvah class while their parents share tips and trials. Please join us at Sha'ar Zahav for a potluck brunch. Bring your babies and a dish to pass. Older siblings welcome.

Tot Shabbat

Saturday, November 19, 10:30 am

Saturday, December 17, 10:30 am

Come celebrate Shabbat with your tot. Bring your 2 to 5 year olds for singing, prayer, challah-making, arts, and movement. Younger siblings and nonmembers are welcome. Get on our tot email list by contacting Sue Bojdak (educator@shaarzahav.org).

Family Kabbalat Shabbat

Friday, November 18, 6:30 pm

Friday, December 16, 6:30 pm

Meet, eat, sing and celebrate Shabbat with CSZ families, then stay for Friday night services. Families and children of all ages are welcome. Dinner is vegetarian potluck. Bring family and friends plus a dish to share. No RSVP is required.

Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer Classes Begin September 7.

Back-to-School Night

Monday, September 26, 7 - 8:30 pm

An opportunity to learn more about Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer, ask your questions and share your ideas. Plus, meet your children's teachers and study and schmooze with other parents. Please RSVP for childcare by Wednesday, September 21.

There is NO BEIT SEFER on November 23rd and 26th for Thanksgiving holiday AND on December 21st, 24th, 28th, and 31st for Winter Break.

Hanukkah O Hanukkah:

A Family Celebration

Friday, December 30th - 6:00pm

Come light the menorah! Let's have a party! Dreidel games, art activities, latkes, storytelling, and candlelighting and singing with the whole CSZ community at Friday night services. Potluck dinner begins at 6:00. Please bring your favorite latkes or some other vegetarian dish to pass. Appropriate for families with children of all ages.

Beit Sefer Students Aid

Jewish Hurricane Victims

In Jackson, Mississippi, Beth Israel Congregation is the only synagogue and has a membership of just 200 families. Since Hurricane Katrina devastated the gulf coast in early September, this small congregation has taken in nearly 100 Jewish families who lost everything in the disaster. Inspired by their generosity, Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer students got organized to help. On October 8, students filled seventeen backpacks with basic household goods and their heartfelt notes of support. We hope this small act of loving kindness offers some relief to the families still reeling from the upheaval of Katrina.

Upcoming Bnei Mitzvah students to profile are Benjamin Bernard-Herman on November 5, Allison Schaffer on November 19, Zach Ruylemeyer on December 17, and Yonah Levy on December 31.

Plus looking farther, we have Reuben Raff on January 7, Desmond Bernstein on February 18 and Raena Frolich on February 23.

Contact Sue Bojdak, Director of Family and Children's Education, (415/861-6932 x302 or educator@shaarzahav.org) for more information about any of these programs or to RSVP.

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Tikkun Olam

Across Faiths

By Sarita Groisser

This summer, I was privileged to have the opportunity to attend a six-day gathering of interfaith activists from around the country and the world. It was run by (People Improving their Communities Through Organizing (PICO) , which is the national network of faith-based community organizations of which the San Francisco Organizing Project (SFOP) is a part. CSZ (enough acronyms yet?) joined SFOP more than a year ago and is already seen as an active and welcome Jewish presence. On the first day of the training, I was honored to lead a teaching/prayer Shabbat service for approximately 85 people of other faiths. It was a very moving experience. Every day, participants approached me, expressing appreciation for sharing some of my faith background and wanting to know more about Judaism. For me, the experience certainly met and surpassed its goals of 1) people from across the country networking, and 2) learning about the model of faith-based organizing. I'd be happy to share more information about PICO and SFOP. Just ask!

SAVE THE DATES:

On Tuesday, November 15 at 7 pm, CSZ's own Local Organizing Committee will be meeting on our usual third Tuesday. All are welcome, including new attendees! We'll be discussing how our research actions are helping us focus on an issue on which to take strong and faith-based action.

On Sunday afternoon, November 20 at Mission High School, SFOP will be holding a citywide action around the issues of youth and violence, as well as other critical social justice issues. The mayor and many other elected officials will be present to hear the concerns and feel the passion of their constituents. Come and stand in solidarity with our neighbors of all faiths and backgrounds!

Rainbow Fund 5766

Launches in December

The Rainbow Fund, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav's annual appeal will launch on December 1. Between December and February, every member of our congregation as well as many family members and friends will receive letters, calls, or personal visits asking for a Rainbow contribution. Over the past two years, the Rainbow Fund has proven that our community is able to provide critically needed funds for the programs and operation of CSZ. (Remember that in general, dues do not cover the costs of sustaining our lively community.) We hope that you will respond to the letter, phone call, or visit from a Rainbow Fund representative – who after all, will be a fellow or sister congregant. If you have questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Marianne Balin, Fund Development Co-chair, at (510) 339.9468 or mbalin@aol.com.

Beit Sefer-led Services

Saturday, November 12, 10 am

You won't want to miss this terrific opportunity to daven with the youth of our community. From the youngest members of our religious school to those b'nei mitzvah veterans, our students will be sharing their torah with us at this special twice a year event. You will be energized and inspired. Please come and support our kids.

New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained the following new members this month. A warm welcome to the most recent people to join our family:

Danny Kodmur

Ruth Bernstein and Matthew Patchell, Zachary (9) and Nina (6)

Kimberly Powe and Jared Boigon

Tom Lakritz

Melanie Miguel and Michael Shiloh (Yazzie, 10)

Marc Breindel

Aaron Levine and Patty Ryan, Sam (9) and Carly (6)

Sharon Snyder

Nancy Brunn

David Zeeman

Marty Tiltzner

Niki and Richard Rothman

Marc Lipsett and Elizabeth Jaroslow, Morey (8), Jake (2), Freddie and Zachary (3 months)

Jackie Kaplan

Laura Narimatsu

We are grateful to see our congregation grow. It is up to all of us to help our new members feel welcome as they become active participants in our community.

See what going above and beyond really means!



Eileen Lynette
415.695.0552 ext 235
eileenlynette@zephyrsf.com

Nancy Meyer
415.695.0552 ext 237
nancymeyer@zephyrsf.com

If you or anyone you know is thinking of selling or buying a home, call us!



A Little Learning: Adult Education

Hannah & Samuel (With Michael Sarid)

Two Tuesdays, November 1 and 8, 7 pm

Part 1: On Loan to God

Join us for a close reading of the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, found at the beginning of the first book of Samuel. In Part 1, we will learn how Hannah's story of personal transformation marks a turning point in Biblical literature, foreshadowing national themes with an ironic twist all its own.

Part 2: Not By Might

The Hannah story concludes with a poetic prayer, unique in Biblical literature for its rich language and allegorical content. Our study of Hannah's song will reveal themes of personal and political reversals of fortune which have reverberated throughout our history as a people. Some knowledge of Hebrew would be helpful, but is not required.

"The Trial of God"

with Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Wednesday, November 30 and Thursday, December 8, 7 pm

While interred in Auschwitz, Eli Weisel witnessed a trial in which God was the defendant. God was tried for violating the covenant by turning away from the Jewish people in their greatest hour of need. Join Rabbi Angel as we read and discuss this stunning work, which is part of the long Jewish tradition of arguing with God. \$18 CSZ members; \$36 non-members.

How to Study Torah

Two Saturdays, December 10 and 17, 1 - 3 pm

How do we study our most sacred book? Garry Koenigsberg will lead us in a two-part shabbaton, discussing such topics as: What is the oral torah versus the written Torah? Where did these texts come from? What is the role of traditional interpreters such as Rashi? How are progressive and traditional Torah study both different and yet the same? Spend a couple of Shabbat afternoons in communal study and reflection. \$5 per session. A light lunch will be provided.

ARTS Spotlight

Our fabulous artists within the Sha'ar Zahav Community have been quite busy! Hopefully, you caught some fine gazing at Open Studios this last month. Some of our members who opened their amazing work spaces for the public were Ray Bernstein, Andrea Guerra, and Donna Blow <http://dzinesbydonna.com>. Also, in mid-October, Trudi Hauptman's guild, PenWAG (PeninsulaWearable Art Group) had a table at the annual

Peninsula International Quilt Festival. Trudi had two full ensembles in their Wearable's display and was juried in this largest Textile event on the West Coast.

Artists abound in our CSZ Community!

Please let Steve Mazer know, programs@sha'arzahav.com if you have information about gigs, open studios, performances or classes you're teaching coming up within the month, so it can be placed in the next weekly email.

Please send a blurb to Barbara Cymrot at bcymrot@sbcglobal.net by December 12th for the next January-February issue of the Forward.

A Writing and Midrash Workshop

as part of the day-long "Bible by the Bay" event, December 4, 4 pm

Dan Bellm will be teaching "Poetry, Prose and Midrash" at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco (JCC of SF). This is a writing workshop for writers of all levels of experience for interested in combining weekly Torah study with their own creative expression through poetry or prose:

GENESIS:

Tuesday, November 1-December 13, 4 pm

EXODUS:

Tuesday, January 17-March 7, 4 pm

Look forward to our very own CSZ Art Shabbaton this winter and spring featuring a growing group of CSZ artists!

Want to participate?

Volunteer? Teach?

Please contact Alan Foss (mucholibros@aol.com) or Barbara Cymrot (bcymrot@sbcglobal.net) for further details.

Look for Janis Portal's paintings on her new Web-site: <http://www.portalrepresentations.com>. Janis writes that in her art, she approaches "feelings and perceptions that have been with me since I was a small child."

First Friday Shabbat

Potluck Dinners

Friday, November 4, 6:30 pm

Friday, December 2, 6:30 pm

Join us for a potluck Shabbat dinner before services on the first Friday of every month. Everyone is welcome to eat, schmooze and get to know more people in the CSZ community. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share at the Shabbat table in the Oneg room. Sponsored by the Keshet Committee.

Jersey - - and most importantly, get to know our fellow travelers in that way that only sharing an adventure abroad could do. Our guide was the indomitable Renee Goutman, a sprightly veteran of Israeli culture, politics and anthropology with a French accent reflecting her Parisian roots. Joined by Rabbi Angel, for whom this was a sixth return visit, we set out on a course that took us from Tel Aviv, to Jerusalem, to Haifa and Safed, to the Galilee and Golan, to Masada and the Dead Sea, and back to Jerusalem - - all in 12 days.

Our second lesson: it's a tribute to our people that we could have survived that heat for so many thousands of years. But Israel refreshes at every turn: swimming in the Mediterranean at dusk or at the Ein Gedi falls; celebrating Havdalah under a canopy of stars overlooking Jerusalem's old city; finding that perfect memento to take home; laughing on the bus like the wild teenagers we once were.

The Yad Vashem Museum and Memorial crowns a densely forested hillside on the outskirts of Jerusalem. It is Israel's testimony to the Holocaust or "Shoa," Catastrophe as it is sometimes called. These are haunting hours spent in what must be the world's most comprehensive collection of photographs and records pertaining to this chapter of our people's lives - chronologically revisiting the vibrant cultures of Eastern Europe, witnessing their destruction, and our hard fought deliverance to Eretz Israel and the free world. One emerges from this house of memories as if seeing it for the very first time, though of course we have not. At the end of the tunnel-like structure - - the renowned architect Moshe Safdie designed it so, there is light: the verdant hillsides of today's Israel. And prayer: at the adjacent Valley of the Communities - canyon rocks carved with the names of every village and city throughout the world that lost its inhabitants to the Shoah. Our 16 prayed arm-to-arm, voices joined in remembrance.

Lesson Three: do what the camel says. When the hairy, spitting, cud-chewing, odoriferous (though rather handsomely accessorized) beast decides it wants to lumber some more through the sand, even though a fabulous Bedouin goat feast is getting cold back at the tent (not to mention a fabulous Bedouin), don't argue, ride: camels are stubborn, like our people, and they're built to outlast the Romans, drought and hungry tourists. Note to self: better cell phone reception on the back of a camel in the Judean Desert than on 280. Rabbi, was that you taking a call from home?

And I thought kibbutz life was all about hard work - no doubt it is for those who live and work there. But Israelis are enterprising - turning not only sea salt to fresh water, but a Golan border kibbutz into a resort oasis, complete with an Olympic-sized pool and evening "entertainment" reincarnating Elvis Presley. There, not far from the Syrian border, in the lush Jordan River Valley, we rested for two days, before heading south to the desert and our steep 5AM climb up to the ancient fortress city of Masada, yet another symbol of how our people endures.

Endurance, it seems, permeates everything and everyone in Israel. The hotelkeeper waiting for peace to bring tourists; the orthodox theocracy administering their Messianic vision of Israel; an Ethiopian refugee mother struggling on welfare; parents whose children emigrate to Europe and the US seeking an easier life; stones from Jewish cities three thousand years old; olive trees defying bulldozers; the child for whom Kadima includes a bomb

shelter drill; a Palestinian office worker in Israel, forced daily to exhaustively traverse crowded unsanitary checkpoints to and from the territories; a young Israeli soldier looking on dutifully, obdurately, mechanically, sadly, waiting for her shift to end. Everywhere, someone's day directly hardened by political realities.

Jerusalem Open House serves as the LGBT Center in Jerusalem. It occupies a nondescript third floor office in a downtown business district - - subtle enough, so that the Orthodox Jew can safely explore a library and computer affirming his or her sexuality, even sharing a computer and cup of Turkish coffee with a more Windows-savvy Arab student. On a side alley only a few blocks away, Tmol Shilshom, the latest addition to Jerusalem's trendy bookstore/café scene, has become a social gathering point for many of the city's most progressive voices.

There are, in fact, many new faces driving Israel's progressive political and cultural movements. IRAC (Israel Religious Action Center) is evolving as one of Israel's strongest advocates for civil rights, including minorities. Their legal teams brief the Israeli Supreme Court and support other grass-roots organizations. Every Saturday morning, five women collectively the core of an organization called Checkpoint Watch, patrol the defense barrier and various checkpoints to observe military security operations - a civilian watch to prevent or if necessary report harassment of Arab day commuters and travelers from the territories. Within the rabbinical community, Rabbis for Human Rights, advocates a more humane Israel in the context of the country's defense needs.

Israel in twelve days: a clear and conflicting rush of perspectives and impressions that will take many months longer to digest.

In the meantime, the World Zionist Organization (WZO) is holding elections November 15, 2005 through February 15, 2006. The WZO determines who attends the World Zionist Congress which, in turn, has the charter to distribute hundreds of millions of dollars of funding which can positively or adversely affect the status of Reform Judaism in Israel and worldwide. Among the items on the table: the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, training for Reform Rabbis in Israel, and support for Israeli organizations advocating religious pluralism and civil rights. Voting is open to all who register beginning November 15th through February 28th 2006. (www.votereformjudaism.com).

Well, to this sojourner, at least one thing is clear: we, as a progressive congregation, can have a voice in the family of congregations' shepherding Israel to a place of equality and internal strength. And to witness and help that strength unfold is to be a critical part of this new chapter in our Israel's and our Jewish history.



Scholar-in-Residence:

Dvora Weisberg

Friday, December 2, 8:15 pm

Special Sermon at Kabbalat Shabbat Services

Saturday, December 3, 12 - 4 pm A Day of Learning

Dvora Weisberg is Associate Professor of Rabbinics and Director of the Beit Midrash at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles. Dr. Weisberg was raised in San Francisco. She received her B.A. summa cum laude from Brandeis University, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Her undergraduate thesis, for which she was awarded highest honors in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, was entitled "Can the Demands of Jewish Feminists Be Met Within the Halakhic System?" She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in Talmud and Rabbinic Literature from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Dr. Weisberg's Topics will include

The Good Life

What constitutes a well-lived life? Does Jewish tradition offer any standard against which we can assess our own lives? Dr. Weisberg will explore a Talmudic passage and evaluate it as a source of guidance for contemporary Jews seeking meaning.

Rabbinic Heroes and What We Learn from Them

The ancient rabbis told many stories, some of them about themselves. We will read stories told about the lives of several famous rabbis and consider what these stories tell us about the ancient Jewish visions of heroism.

Social Justice and Rabbinic Judaism

Many of us are actively engaged in tikkun olam, social justice aimed as "repairing the world." Where did tikkun olam come from? We will explore the earliest texts about tikkun olam and consider what the ancient rabbis considered "broken" and how they went about repairing it. We will also consider the rabbis' integration of the religious and the ethical into a single system.

Latkes and Vodkas:

A Sophisticated Chanukah Celebration

Piping hot latkes and icy cold vodkas... this could be the start of a new tradition! CSZ teams up with the Jewish Community Federation's LGBT Alliance for an adults-only Chanukah cocktail party. Exact date and location to be announced, but it will be at a fun and hip venue and you're gonna love it!

Please Be in Touch With Me

I am eager to be in touch with all members of the CSZ family whenever there are occasions of joy or sadness in your lives. Where there is a death in the family, please call me as soon as possible. We very much want to be there with you at a time of grief.

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in memory of Joseph Wiseman.

Avraham Giannini.

Stephen and Trudi Hauptman
in memory of Michael Hauptman.

Orren Perlman.

Jeffrey Sherman
in memory of Miriam Kemp.

Arthur Slepian and Gerry Llamado
in honor of the naming of
Sadie Rawlings-Fein.
in honor of Barbara Cymrot and
Marc Wernick, for completing the
Half Marathon.

in honor of the people who delivered
sermons at our 5766 High Holidays:
Rabbi Camille Angel, Andrew Ramer,
Joss Eldredge, and Rabbi Yoel Kahn.
in honor of all the pitchers of our 5766
High Holiday Appeal: Steve Mazer,
Ida Kuluk, Jeanette Nichols,
Jay Davidson.

in honor of Steve Mazer, for his
leadership, planning and execution of
High Holidays 5766.

David Stein and Bill Stewart.

Sharon Strassfeld
in honor of Rabbi Angel,
Kayla Strassfeld and Stephan Lynch.

High Holiday Pledge 5765

Lonnie Weiss.

Library Fund

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in memory of David's cousin,
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MD Phase 2

Anonymous.

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in memory of David's friend,
Frank Hyman.

Music Fund

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in memory of David's parents,
Albert and Fannie Stein.

Phyllis Mintzer Education Fund

Lynn Eden and Ruth Schoenbach.

Andrea Guerra.

Marc Lipsett and Elizabeth Jaroslow.

Judy Macks

in memory of Joe Ruskay and
Cecile Winters.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Tamara Abrams and Carol Barnett
in honor of Max and
Eli Barnett Abrams.

Dan Najjar

in memory of his parents, Dora Herzig
and Hayim Hajjar.

Sharon Strassfeld
in honor of Rabbi Angel,
Kayla Strassfeld and Stephan Lynch.

Rainbow Fund 5765

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Birthdays

November



| | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Jacob Lipsett |
| 1 | Steven Polsky |
| 1 | Joss Eldredge |
| 3 | Donna Blow |
| 5 | Hazel Olson-Dorf |
| 5 | Steve Marshall |
| 5 | Eric Weiss |
| 5 | Samuel Kaplan |
| 5 | Mara Shuster-Lefkowitz |
| 6 | Martin Tilzer |
| 6 | Jerrold Polansky |
| 7 | Rachel Kliegman |
| 7 | Joel Ginsberg |
| 7 | Samuel Rodriguez |
| 8 | Tova Green |
| 8 | William Garcia |
| 9 | Brad Post |
| 9 | Abraham Katz |
| 9 | Shmulik Fishman |
| 10 | Elijah Lezell Jatovsky |
| 10 | Evan Markiewicz |
| 11 | Patricia Lin |
| 12 | Richard Weiner |
| 12 | Gina Surber |
| 13 | Cohen Stein |
| 14 | Ken Repp |
| 15 | Manny Fishman |
| 16 | Ruth Rainero |
| 16 | Jason Baskin |
| 18 | Adam Orman |
| 20 | Ali Cannon |
| 20 | Alan Gordon |
| 22 | Anna Stuart-Friedman |
| 23 | Benjamin Gustavson-Scharf |
| 24 | Justyn Haveson-Lezin |
| 24 | Alexis Lezin |
| 24 | Ellie Cohen |
| 25 | Michael Sporn |
| 26 | Nancy Kates |
| 28 | Judy Schwartz |
| 28 | Beatrice Lieberman |
| 28 | Jacob Greenberg-Bell |
| 29 | Harold Podgur |
| 29 | David Rosenzweig |

December

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Rachael Reiley |
| 1 | Maxima Alexandra |
| 2 | Paul Fishman |
| 2 | Rose Katz |
| 2 | Betsy Kassoff |
| 3 | Sophie Macks |
| 3 | Emma Greenberg-Bell |
| 4 | Kelley Clements |

| | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 6 | Dan Alpert |
| 9 | Rephael Cannon |
| 9 | Lisa Windesheim-Zigas |
| 9 | Chaya Rivka Mayerson |
| 9 | Lisa Inman |
| 10 | Cindy Icke |
| 10 | Debbie Levy |
| 11 | Ro'e Zaid |
| 11 | Joel Springer |
| 12 | William Goldstein |
| 12 | Walter Leiss |
| 13 | Anna Downs |
| 14 | Aaron Goldman-Maclachlan |
| 14 | Isabel Lahn-Schroeder |
| 15 | Ron Lezell |
| 15 | Phil Charney |
| 15 | Nina Raff |
| 15 | Samuel Ryan |
| 16 | Karen Segal |
| 17 | Ina Turpen Fried |
| 18 | Leslie Kane |
| 19 | A. David Shaber |
| 20 | Jack Lasner |
| 20 | Michele Williamson |
| 21 | Emma Simonoff |
| 22 | Nina Patchell |
| 22 | Ellen Murland |
| 23 | Evan Kuluk |
| 23 | Jeffrey Piade |
| 24 | Andrew Parker-Rose |

| | |
|----|-----------------------|
| 24 | Yonah Levy |
| 26 | Daniel Meyer-O'Keeffe |
| 26 | Scott Wenders |
| 26 | Anne Bluethenthal |
| 28 | Simon Crosby |
| 28 | Allison Schaffer |
| 29 | Reuben Winters Raff |
| 29 | Barry Schmell |
| 29 | Bernard Choden |
| 30 | Jazmine Best |
| 31 | Gerry Llamado |
| 31 | Sam Thal |
| 31 | Greer Hauptman |
| 31 | Carolyn Ryan |

Naches



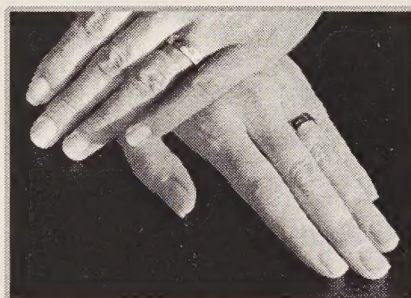
Barbara Cymrot and Marc Wernick for completing the SF Half Marathon (13.1 miles) and raising over \$6500 for the SF AIDS Foundation through the National AIDS Marathon Program.

Aaron Danzig on the purchase of his first home.

Stefan Lynch on his entry into the Covenant.

Alexis Lezin and Laurie Schmidt on the birth of their son, Solomon David Lezin Schmidt.

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Ora Prochovnick on being named a "Super Lawyer" in San Francisco Magazine. The list is generated by a survey of lawyers as well as the review of a panel of experts, and is intended to reflect "a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement."

Rebecca Goldfader on the opening of "Pilates Heights," her Pilates studio in Bernal Heights.

Marty and Shelli Rawlings-Fein, on the naming of Sadie Rawlings-Fein.

Carla Gomez and Sandy Feinland on the birth of their son, Nathan Sy Prado Feinland.

Barbara Braasch and Sharon Snyder on the occasion of their Aufruf.

Zach Ruylemeyer on the occasion of his naming.

Sarah Orman on the occasion of her Welcoming.

Oneg, Flower and Childcare Sponsorships



August 5/6

Bimah Flowers and Oneg sponsored by **Manny Fishman** and **Leslie Kane** in honor of their 30th Anniversary.

August 11/12

Bimah flowers sponsored by **Evelyn and Philip Barnett** in honor of the naming of Max and Eli Barnett-Abrams.

Friday oneg sponsored by **James Carlson** in memory of his mother, Jan Tuzzolino.

Friday night child care sponsored in honor of Stefan Lynch's mother, Gail.

Saturday oneg sponsored by **Georgia and Nat Abrams** in honor of the Naming of Max and Eli Barnett-Abrams.

August 19/20

Oneg sponsored by **Larry Best and Ming Leung** in honor of their 12th anniversary.

August 26/27

Bimah flowers sponsored in honor of Raena Frohlich and her first time as co-leader.

September 2/3

Bimah flowers sponsored by **Arthur Slepian and Gerry Llamado** in memory of Sarah Slepian.

Oneg sponsored by **Donna Fein** in honor of the Naming of Sarah Viola Rawlings-Fein.

Friday night child care sponsored by **Randy Blaustein** in honor of the birth of her neices and in memory of her friend, John Bernd.

September 9/10

Bimah flowers sponsored by **Randy Blaustein** in memory of her father, Edward and her grandfather, Joseph.

Saturday oneg sponsored by the **Children's Education Board** in honor of the dedication of Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer.

September 16/17

Bimah flowers sponsored by **Karen Schiller and Marc Wernick** in appreciation of all of the Open House volunteers.

Oneg sponsored by **Fox Frohlich** in honor of her daughter, Raena, co-leading services.

September 23/24

Bimah flowers, oneg and Friday night child care sponsored "In appreciation of our fabulous community and our beautiful children. Rabbi Angel, Steven and Gabby at this busy time. Bless us all."

Saturday oneg sponsored by **Marius Greenspan** in memory of his father, Earl Greenspan.

Anniversaries



November

- 6 James Edlin and Eve Meyer
- 8 Michael Bettinger and Robert Goldstein
- 11 Terry Fletcher and Glen Hauer
- 14 Anne Bluethenthal and Donna Rae Palmer
- 17 Lisa Katz and Sharon Heath
- 17 Elizabeth and Michael Schaffer
- 18 Lele and Rachel Field
- 19 Rose-Anne Donner Colt and David Colt
- 24 Ann Daniels and Jonathan Zingman
- 29 Rachel MacLachlan and Nancy Silverrod

December

- 2 Sara Haber and Beth Sousa
- 4 Katrina Kuzniuk and Jesse Hover

- 8 Claudia Bernard and Howard Herman
- 13 Pieter de Haan and Ruth Rainero
- 22 Michael Frank and David Adams
- 25 Brian Grossman and Malcolm Haar
- 28 A.J. and Ina Turpen Fried
- 31 Florence and Steven Nacamulli
- 31 Lynn Eden and Ruth Schoenbach

Condolences

Richard Weiner, on the death of his uncle, Zalman Weiner.

Annie Winters, on the death of her mother, Cecile Winters.

Ina and AJ Turpen Fried, on the death of their friend, Angela Phipps Towle.

Richard Weiner, on the death of his uncle, Raul Menzel.

Shelli Rawlings-Fein, on the death of her cousin, Barney Phillips.

Michael Frank, on the death of his grandfather, Irving Balis.

Marty Rawlings-Fein, on the death of his aunt, Marie Frietas.

Bob Morelli, on the death of his mother, Elizabeth Morelli.

Sharon Snyder, on the death of her aunt, Esther Nefsky.

Danny Fishman-Engel, on the death of his grandfather, Herman Engel.

Deborah Udin, on the death of her brother, Kenneth Udin.

Batya Kalis, on the death of her friend, Alan Manne.

Kendra Lubalin, on the death of her uncle, Steve Salmore.

Yahrzeits

November

- 3 Forrest Kincade
- 7 Donald Albert
- 11 Sidney Rosenthal
- 11 Bruce Apter
- 16 Chuck Norton
- 19 Richard D. Wright
- 22 Tristano Palermينو

December

- 4 Marilyn O'Keeffe
- 9 Isa Leah Cymrot-Wu
- 18 David Glassberg
- 20 Norman David Kramer
- 21 Walter Palmer
- 29 Allan Craig

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CSZ Staff

Rabbi

Camille Shira Angel (x301)
 • rabbianangel@shaarzahav.org

Administrator

Steven Angelides (x304)
 • steven@shaarzahav.org

Director of Children's and Family Education

Sue Bojdak (x302)
 • educator@shaarzahav.org

Rabbi's Assistant/Membership Liaison

Gabby Volodarsky (x310)
 • gabby@shaarzahav.org

Officers

President, Arthur Slepian
 • cszpres@pacbell.net
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 Barbara Cymrot
 Ron Edelman
 Joss Eldridge
 Paula Fleisher
 Tony Harris
 Marc Lipschutz
 Richard Meyerson
 Judy Schwartz
 Marc Wernick

Members wishing to contact any Va'ad
 member or committee chair are invited
 to obtain his or her number from the
 synagogue office.

Bikkur Cholim: If you or a friend who
 is a member of Sha'ar Zahav is ill in
 the hospital or at home, please notify
 the synagogue office.

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Committee Chairs

Bikkur Cholim, open
Book Group, Mark Mackler
Building and Grounds, Irene Ogus
Bylaws, Howard Steiermann
Children's Education Board,
 Howard Herman and Debbie Levy
Cemetery, David Stein
Dues, Tiela Chalmers
East Bay Chavurah, Open
Endowment Fund, David Stein
Experiment in Congregational Education,
 Dan Bellm
Finance, Karen Schiller
Fine Arts, Barbara Cymrot
Fund Development, Marianne Balin and
 Tony Harris
Gift Shop, Jeff Rubin
Israel Committee, Miki Goralsky and
 Steve Mazer
I.T., Drew Parker-Rose
Kesher, Kelly Cytron and
 Katrina Kuzniuk

*Our heartfelt appreciation
 to the dedication and work of
 outgoing chair, Joel Springer.*

*Leadership Development and Volunteer
 Coordination*, Sara Haber
Library, Bernard Schertzer
Membership, open
Newsletter, Prudence Carter
 • pruc@sbcglobal.net
Past Presidents' Council, David Gellman
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 Steve Mazer • programs@shaarzahav.org
Progressive Chavurah Chair, Jim Frazin
Public Relations, Robert Bernardo
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Ritual, Leslie Kane and Jeff Piade
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Social Action, Susan Lubeck and
 Sara Haber
URJ Regional Liaison, Daniel Chesir
WCGLBTJ liaison, David Gellman
Website Development, Sara Haber,
 Steve Mazer and Naomi Szoke

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|--|--|---|--|---|
| | | 1 <i>Tishri 30</i> | 2 <i>Cheshvan 1</i> | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm Hannah and Samuel, with Michael Sarid (Part 1) | 4 pm Beit Sefer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm First Friday Shabbat Potluck Dinner 8:15 pm Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel, Steve Weitz, Benjamin Rainero- deHaan | 9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services Benjamin Bernard- Herman Bar Mitzvah |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm Hannah and Samuel, with Michael Sarid (Part 2) | 4 pm Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | Veteran's Day 7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Zach Ruylemeyer | 9 am Torah Study 10 am Beit Sefer-led services by Andy Fyne Harrison Weinberg 7 pm Israel Trip Discussion & Havdallah Potluck |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| | | 6 pm SFOP 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 6:30 pm Va'ad | 4 pm Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ritual Committee 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Family Shabbat Dinner 7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Kabbalat Shabbat Ensemble | 9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel Allison Schaffer Bat Mitzvah 10:30 am Tot Shabbat |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| | | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm Kasher Committee | No Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | Thanksgiving 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Reuben Raff | 9 am Torah Study No Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services led by Desmond Bernstein |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |
| | | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm CEB Committee | 4 pm Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm "The Trial of God" with Rabbi Angel | Advertising To place a display or classified ad, call the office. | | |
| | | | | Articles Please submit your articles as a Word attachment via email to: pruc@sbcglobal.net. No late submissions will be accepted. | | |
| | | | | January/February Deadline: Tuesday, December 2, 5pm | | |

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | 1 <i>Kislev 1</i> | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm World AIDS Day Commemoration | 6:30 pm First Friday Shabbat Potluck Dinner 8:15 pm Scholar-in-Residence Drash at Shabbat Service led by Leslie Kane, Ruth Rainero, Yonah Levy | 9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel 12 pm Scholar-in-Residence 7 pm Scholar Fundraising Event |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 <i>10</i> |
| 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 4 pm Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm "The Trial of God" with Rabbi Angel (Part 2) | 8:15 pm Shabbat Services led by Howard Steiermann, Marc Wernick, Desmond Bernstein | 9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services led by Reuben Raff 1 pm How to Study Torah with Garry Koenigsberg |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 <i>17</i> |
| 10 am Baby Chavurah (offsite) 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm Keshet Committee | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 4 pm Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 6:30 pm Va'ad Meeting | 6:30 pm Family Shabbat Dinner 7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Kabbalat Shabbat Ensemble | 9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel Zachary Ruylemeyer Bar Mitzvah 10:30 am Tot Shabbat 1 pm How to Study Torah with Garry |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 6:30 pm CEB Meeting | 6 pm SFOP 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | No Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 7 pm Our Jewish Identity During the Christian Holidays | 7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Benjamin Rainero- deHaan | 9 am Torah Study No Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 <i>1</i> |
| 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | Hanukkah 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | No Beit Sefer 5 pm Homeless dinner at Most Holy Redeemer 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service | 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service 6:30 pm Ritual Committee | 6:30 pm Family Hanukkah Celebration 7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel, and Desmond Bernstein | 9 am Torah Study No Beit Sefer 10 am Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel Yonah Levy Bat Mitzvah |